

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 14 remain in this application. Claim 1 has been amended. Reconsideration of this application in view of the amendments noted is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been amended such that "a conformable base" now reads --a conformable generally laminar base layer member--. Also, "an attachment member" now reads --a generally laminar attachment layer member--.

In the Office Action, claims 1 - 7, 9, and 11 - 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kornerup (U.S. Patent No. 5,685,859). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Kornerup does not disclose a generally laminar attachment layer member connected to an upper surface of a base layer, the attachment layer member including a center portion and a longitudinally extending locking strip extending from each of opposite ends of the center portion. In Kornerup, if the elongated section 160 of the support component 150 in Figs. 5 - 7 is considered to be a center portion of an attachment member, it is not a generally laminar layer member as in present claim 1. Further, the securing strips 143 of Kornerup do not extend from ends of the center portion as in present claim 1. Rather, the securing strips 143 extend from sides of the center portion that do not correspond with the ends of the center portion. Moreover, in Kornerup, the securing strips 143 do not extend from the center portion longitudinally relative to the base as in present claim 1. The base 141 of Kornerup has an oval shape (column 7, lines 3 - 4) that inherently has a longitudinal direction in the elongated direction of the oval along its major axis. The support component 150 extends along the longitudinal direction of the base 141. The securing strips 143 then extend transverse to the longitudinal direction of the base 141 and support component 150. In contrast, as claimed in present claim 1, the base extends longitudinally and the locking strips also extend longitudinally along the same axis.

For these reasons, applicant respectfully requests that the Section 102(b) rejection of claims 1 - 7, 9, and 11 - 14 over Kornerup be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 11 - 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Boyd (U.S. Patent No. 3,834,380). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Boyd does not disclose a generally laminar base layer member. Boyd also does not disclose an attachment member connected to the base and having a center portion and at least one longitudinally extending locking strip extending from one end of the center portion and at least one other longitudinally extending locking strip extending from the other end of the center portion. In Boyd, if structure 20 (Fig. 4) is considered the base, it is not a generally laminar layer member as claimed in present claim 1. The structure 20 is a longitudinally split, elongate, cylindrical clamping tube (see column 3, lines 3 - 4), which is not a laminar layer. Further, if structure 20 is the base, then Boyd fails to include a generally laminar attachment layer member connected to the base, the attachment member having a center portion and locking strips extending from opposite ends of the center portion. In Boyd, the latching flap 22 extends from the base 20, not from an attachment member connected to the base. Furthermore, Boyd does not disclose that the locking strips are integral portions of an attachment layer member as in the present invention. Moreover, even if structure 20 is considered to be a center portion of an attachment member connected to the base, Boyd does not disclose at least one longitudinally extending locking strip extending from one end of the center portion and at least one other longitudinally extending locking strip extending from the other end of the center portion as claimed in present claim 1. In Boyd, only one latching flap 22 extends from the clamping tube 20.

For these reasons, applicant respectfully requests that the Section 102(b) rejection of claims 1, 4, 5, 11 - 14 over Boyd be withdrawn.

Claim 8 was rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kornerup in view of Bierman (U.S. Patent No. 6,689,104). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Claim 8 depends indirectly from claim 1. As argued above, claim 1 is allowable over Kornerup. Therefore, claim 8 is also allowable over Kornerup, and further over any

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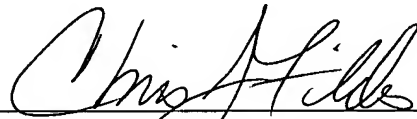
combination of Kornerup with Bierman. Hence, applicant respectfully requests that the Section 103(a) rejection of claim 8 over Kornerup in view of Bierman be withdrawn.

This amendment and request for reconsideration is felt to be fully responsive to the comments and suggestions of the examiner and to present the claims in condition for allowance. Favorable action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris Fildes", is written over a horizontal line.

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